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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet presents guidelines and tips for parents on setting limits for the behavior of young children. The need for limits and the goal of teaching children self-control are explained. Some general guidelines for limit setting are provided which include making the limits age-appropriate, recognizing the child's need for practice and repetition and to test or try out new limits, and understanding the importance of follow through and a calm, definite attitude. Next, specific tips for setting limits are presented: (1) be specific and clear; (2) be simple, brief, and to the point; (3) state directions positively; (4) use hard-line phrases selectively; (5) offer alternatives for unacceptable behavior; (6) replace threats with clear expectations and consequences; (7) eliminate questions you really don't mean to ask; (8) avoid labeling; (9) avoid ambivalent words; (10) replace authoritarian words; (11) offer choices when possible; (12) avoid comparisons with other children; and (13) use external references (e.g., clock, activity, signal) for setting limits. Additional suggestions concerning timing and limit setting include establishing routines, pointing out the sequence of activities, allowing time for transition from one activity to another, recognizing that it can be hard for children to stop an activity, and preparing children for new situations. (VW)

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SETTING LIMITS

Tips for Parents of Young Children

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Project Enlightenment, located in Raleigh, North Carolina, is a comprehensive mental health educational program serving young children (birth to age six), their parents, teachers, and other child care givers. Administered through the Wake County Public School System and affiliated with Area Mental Health for Wake County, the Project has received local, state, and national recognition for its innovative approaches to prevention and early intervention, its effective service delivery system, and its positive influence in the community. Selected as a state model for early intervention, Project Enlightenment has also been selected as one of seven national models of preschool mental health programs by the Joint Information Service of the National Association for Mental Health.

Major services of Project Enlightenment include consultation to day care and preschool teachers, parent education, family counseling, teacher training, a demonstration preschool, community consultation and education, services to high risk infants, a TALKline telephone consultation service, and a Parent-Teacher Resource Center. In existence since 1969, the Project includes a multi-disciplinary staff of early childhood educators, parent education workers, and psychologists. Interested persons are invited to visit or write for additional information.

SETTING LIMITS:
Tips for Parents of Young Children

Lynne Johnston
Val Wilson
Charles Kronberg

Edited by McCutchen B. Anderson

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SETTING LIMITS

Tips for Parents of Young Children

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A "MAGICAL" WAY WITH CHILDREN

You've seen it before. Some people seem to have a special knack with children, an almost magical way of getting children to cooperate.

There's no magic, really. Parenting involves a whole set of learned skills. The major ingredient of most of them is limit setting.

Effective limit setting means the ability to set clear guidelines, rules, and definitions to help children understand which behaviors are acceptable. Effective limit setting teaches cooperation, aiding your child's social development.

Effective limit setting makes it more likely that your child will follow rules you've established, helping him or her gain positive self esteem.

As you read the following guidelines and tips, we hope you will pick up some skills that will be helpful with your child. Remember, limit setting does not come naturally to most parents. Like bike riding, it's a skill to be practiced and learned. But once developed, effective limit setting serves as a useful tool for day-to-day interactions with young children and provides a key to positive discipline.

WHY ARE LIMITS NECESSARY?

Parents often ask us why children need limits. Young children need parents to set limits for them because they don't have enough experience to set limits for themselves. Young children tend to be very curious, action-oriented, and excitable. They want what they want right now. Without boundaries, their curiosity, impulsiveness and impatience can lead to hurt or frustration.

For instance, Tom, a young toddler, sees a staircase that looks like great fun and starts to climb. Halfway up the stairs, he stops, turns around, and spies a toy at the bottom that he wants. He reaches for it, falls down the steps, and hurts himself. Tom needs help from an adult in setting boundaries so his curiosity and impulsivity will not end in physical harm. His parents might put a gate across the second or third steps of the staircase. The gate puts a limit on his climbing while allowing him a chance to climb safely.

Youngsters also need limits for a sense of security. Limits help children whittle a frightening world down to their size. Young children need to experience their environment one piece at a time without becoming overwhelmed or anxious. Without limits, four-year-old Mary might eat a whole bag of trick-or-treat candy and get an upset stomach. With a limit set by her parents, Mary is allowed to choose four pieces of candy to eat. This way she is protected from eating all the candy at once and getting sick.

WON'T LIMITS STIFLE MY CHILD'S CREATIVITY?

Parents often worry that placing limits on behavior will make their child less creative and expressive. We have found the opposite to be true. Some of the most anxious children we have worked with are those who have never had limits set for them. The world is too big and too frightening for a young child to handle without an adult's help in setting boundaries. Limits actually free children to explore and create within their own capabilities and help prevent children from becoming overwhelmed and frightened.

For example, the parents of three-year-old Mike have told him, "You need to play in your own backyard." Mike, then, can play freely within the confines of his backyard, letting his tricycle become an imaginary spaceship on a trip to the moon. When he's ready to return to earth and see his family, he's already in his own backyard. Without such limits, Becky, another adventurous three-year-old, might take her spaceship to the moon and end up around the block. When she wants to see her own family, she finds herself alone, possibly lost, and undoubtedly frightened. Which three-year-old do you think is most likely to play pretend spaceship again?

Parents are also sometimes concerned that setting limits for children will have negative effects on their relationship with their child. They fear their children will see them as too strict and not love or trust them. Limit setting **can** have a negative effect if it is done in a harsh, belittling, overcontrolling,

or punitive manner. The kind of limit setting we are advocating, however, helps children feel more loved, safe, and secure; allows them the freedom to explore and be creative; and helps children know they can **depend** on their parents.

Children also depend on parents to teach them social skills. To get along with others, they need to learn self-control and consideration, skills taught through effective limit setting.

Take, for example, Andrew, who wants very much to join in on Laura and Michael's block game. Andrew runs up with his arms out, knocking down the blocks. In Andrew's mind, he has announced his presence and is ready to play. When Laura and Michael are angry about the blocks and don't want to play with him, Andrew is hurt and puzzled. Andrew's father intervenes, however, setting limits and helping Andrew make sense of the situation. "You may not knock the blocks down. You need to use words when you want to play. Andrew, can you ask Laura and Michael if you can help them build with the blocks?"

Laura and Michael are much more likely to let Andrew play if he asks to join them rather than knocking down their blocks. When children sense that parents set firm and appropriate limits and will help them slowly learn more positive behavior, they can relax, trust, and depend on their parents in a very special way.

WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF LIMIT SETTING?

The aim of limit setting is to teach our children self-control. Babies are born having no self-control; they need their parents to provide all the necessary limits. As children grow and gain new skills, they develop new levels of self-control. Over time, through a great deal of repetition and practice, children learn the limits set for them and no longer need our reminders. They slowly internalize the limits we have been repeating to them over and over. A four-year-old, for example, may no longer need us to set a limit about playing near a hot stove but may still need a limit about playing in the street. Children need different limits at different ages because they have different skills. As they mature, with the help of a parent's limits, children gain more experience and develop better judgment and self-control.

LIMIT SETTING: SOME GENERAL GUIDELINES

We have seen families who've been helped with some specific tips on setting limits, and in the next section we'll share some of those with you. The tips were based on the following guidelines:

THE LIMITS YOU SET NEED TO BE APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR CHILD'S AGE.

Two-year-olds need different limits from five-year-olds because five-year-olds have better language skills and are capable of more self-control than two-year-olds. Many child development books can help you know appropriate expectations for children of different ages. Regardless of chronological age, children's physical, cognitive, and social-emotional capabilities must be kept in mind. Expecting children to behave beyond their developmental capabilities will lead only to frustration for parents and children.

REMEMBER THAT CHILDREN NEED LOTS OF PRACTICE AND REPETITION BEFORE A LIMIT WE SET BECOMES A LEARNED, INTERNALIZED BEHAVIOR.

Just as children fall down many times before learning to walk, learning a limit can involve much trial and error.

IN ADDITION TO PRACTICE, CHILDREN NEED TO TEST OR TRY OUT YOUR LIMIT.

Developmentally, children will need to test limits more at certain ages (such as 2 and 4) than at other ages. Some children are more prone to testing limits at all ages. When children test your limits, they often make rebellious-sounding statements like "I won't" or "no way." At other times they may make guilt-provoking statements like "you don't love me," "I hate you," or "you're mean." What their testing statements really mean is "do you really mean what you say?" and "will you follow through?"

START WITH ONE NEW LIMIT-SETTING TIP AT A TIME.

Parents and children both can become confused and overwhelmed if they try to change too many things at once. See which tips seem to fit the needs of your family and then try one new tip or technique at a time. Once you feel comfortable with one, then add another.

ACT, DON'T EXPLAIN.

Following through with the limits you've set is much more effective than nagging, coaxing, or allowing too much stalling. For example, if a parent talks about a limit five times before acting, the child may learn to wait until the fifth request before doing what was asked.

CHILDREN FEEL RELIEVED AND HOPEFUL WHEN THEY KNOW A MISTAKE THEY HAVE MADE IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD AND THAT THEY WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO TRY AGAIN AT A LATER TIME.

Let children know they always have the opportunity to try to behave appropriately, and act as if you know they can. For example, when Johnny had to miss playing with his dad before supper because he hadn't finished cleaning up his room, his dad told Johnny he could have another chance tomorrow. If his room was clean on time the next day, then they would be able to play ball.

ALL THE TECHNIQUES DESCRIBED IN THE NEXT SECTION WORK BEST WHEN THE PARENT'S ATTITUDE IS CALM AND DEFINITE.

Attempts at limit setting become less effective when parents' attitudes are either too angry and harsh, too hesitant and tentative or flip-flop from one extreme to the other. *Firmness: A Way to Help Young Children Behave,* a companion volume in this series, provides pointers to help parents develop a calm and definite style in presenting limits.

LIMIT SETTING NEEDS TO BE EVALUATED PERIODICALLY.

At times, you might decide that a rule or limit is no longer necessary because the child has developed enough self-control to handle the situation without one. At other times, limit setting alone is not sufficient to teach self-control. When this is the case, an approach such as reflective listening, problem-solving, positive reinforcement, natural and logical consequences, or time-out can be utilized. Many child management publications have been written to explain how to use these techniques.

YOU WILL FIND SOME OF THE SPECIFIC TIPS IN THE NEXT SECTION USEFUL.

Others will not fit for your family or your child. Every child is different and every family is unique. Try the tips that you think will help you and your family improve your limit setting.

LIMIT SETTING: SPECIFIC TIPS
THE LANGUAGE OF LIMIT SETTING . . . LET YOUR WORDS WORK FOR YOU

BE SPECIFIC AND CLEAR.

Rather than giving vague and generalized directions such as "behave yourself" or "be a good girl," communicate your expectations specifically and clearly. Use language which describes the limit in behavioral, observable terms. This eliminates mind reading, gives clear guidelines for behavior, and makes it possible for both parents and child to know when limits are being followed.

EXAMPLES:

Vague and General	*Specific and Clear*
"Use your best behavior in the grocery store."	"We walk quietly in the grocery store."
"Straighten up and act like you're supposed to in the car!"	"While we're in the car, you can talk quietly to your brother or look at your picture book."
"You can behave better than that!"	"At the table, use your fork to eat and keep your chair legs on the floor."
"Don't be such a bad boy in the sandbox!"	"Keep the sand in the sandbox. It hurts people's eyes to have sand in them."

BE SIMPLE, BRIEF, AND TO THE POINT.

Are you giving an explanation or setting a limit? When you are setting a limit, make sure the limit is stated as briefly and simply as possible. With long-winded explanations, young children often become confused and stop listening. Limits stated with fewer words are easier for children to remember.

EXAMPLES:

Long-winded and complex	*Simple and brief*
"The toys are all packaged and in boxes ready to be sold to other people. The man who owns the store stacked them up real neatly. He doesn't want children playing with them. A part might get broken and then no one will want to buy them. So keep your hands off those toys; they don't belong to you."	"While we are in the toy store, you can *look* at all the toys. You will need to keep your hands off the packages."
"I can't let you hit Bobby even when you are angry. Hitting is impolite and someone might get hurt. You wouldn't want to hurt anyone, I know. And you don't like it when people hurt you."	"When you're angry at Bobby you need to use words to tell Bobby what is making you mad."

STATE DIRECTIONS POSITIVELY.

Children are likely to follow suggestions you give them. If you say, "don't run around the store," you may inadvertently be giving the suggestion to run around the store. On the other hand, "Please walk inside the store" provides another, more positive suggestion. Positive directions set a friendlier tone. They increase a child's desire to cooperate, give the child guidelines for meeting your expectations, and encourage positive behavior.

EXAMPLES:

Negative	*Positive*
"Don't leave dishes in your room."	"Please take the dishes to the kitchen as soon as you're finished with them."
"Don't spill your food all over the table."	"Keep your food on the plate."
"Don't hit the dog."	"Pat the doggie gently like this" (demonstrate).
"Don't leave toys in the living room."	"Put all your toys in the toy box."
"Don't scream inside."	"Use your quiet voice."

USE HARD-LINE PHRASES SELECTIVELY

If hard-line phrases are used too frequently, children will not take them seriously. Save hard-line phrases for serious circumstances when the child's action is dangerous or destructive. In such situations, phrases such as "I can't let you," "stop," "no," or "that is not allowed" communicate a protective attitude and help children control their impulses. Using hard-line phrases sparingly makes them more effective when they're needed.

EXAMPLES OF HARD-LINE PHRASES USED EFFECTIVELY:

"I can't let you leave the building without me. You need to stay beside me or hold my hand."

"Kicking is not allowed. Use words to tell me what is bothering you."

"Stop climbing near the stove. It is hot."

(Child is approaching a busy street) "Stop now!" (parent picks child up)

OFFER ALTERNATIVES FOR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR.

Often when young children are misbehaving and are told to stop, they have difficulty redirecting themselves. Sometimes children need help finding acceptable ways to handle strong feelings. You might offer specific alternatives which channel those strong feelings constructively, as in, "people are not for hitting; you can use words." Other times, when an object is being misused, children need help learning to use that object appropriately. In this case, pointing out the object's actual function can redirect the child's behavior. When you have to stop a child's behavior, add a suggestion which provides acceptable alternative behaviors.

EXAMPLES:

No alternatives

"I can't let you throw the puzzle pieces."

Alternative provided

"I can't let you throw the puzzle pieces. If you are angry, you can use words to tell me about it."

"Throwing sand is not allowed."	"Throwing sand is not allowed. If you need to throw, throw a ball."
"Stop tearing the book."	"Books are for reading. You can tear the old newspapers in the trash can."

REPLACE THREATS WITH CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Threats create an atmosphere of fear and resentment. Often we make threats when we are irritated or frustrated and then we don't follow through. This can damage our credibility. Clear expectations and consequences, on the other hand, teach children how to behave in specific situations and to recognize that they are responsible for their actions.

EXAMPLES:

Threat	*Clear Expectations*
"Clean up your room or you'll be sorry."	"We will have dinner at six; you can join us when your toys are put on the shelves."
"If you two fight, both of you are going to get into trouble."	"You and your brother will need to use quieter voices or play in separate rooms until lunch time."
"If you don't do what I say, you're going to get it!"	"It's time to come inside. You can walk or I can carry you."
"You'd better not do that, or else!"	"We use crayons on paper at the table. You can keep using the crayons as long as the marks stay on the paper."

ELIMINATE QUESTIONS YOU DON'T REALLY MEAN TO ASK

Ask questions only when you expect an answer and can accept whatever choice the child makes. If you are giving a direction or making a request, use a clear statement rather than a question or plea. Remember, adding "okay" to a statement turns it into a question.

EXAMPLES:

Unclear	*Clear*
"Are you ready for breakfast?"	"Breakfast is ready; it's time to find our seats at the table."

"Put your coat on please, okay?"	"You need to put your coat on before we can go outside."
"Will you pick up your blocks?"	"You will need to put your blocks in the toy box before snack."
"Would you like to go to bed now?"	"It's bedtime. We need to find Teddy so you can tell him 'nite, 'nite."
"Do you want to help me pick up your toys?"	"It's time to clean up. Let's do it together."

AVOID LABELING

Labels such as "you're a baby" or "you're mean" belittle children and damage their self-esteem. Instead of labeling, give specific descriptions of desired behaviors. Also, avoid using labels when talking about children to adults or other children.

EXAMPLES:

Labeling	*Specific Descriptions*
"Act like a four year old. Only babies can't get dressed."	"It's time to put on your shorts and shirt. I bet you can do it yourself."
"Only lazy children won't clean up!"	"Put your toys on the shelf."
(Said to neighbor in front of Johnny). "Johnny has been real mean and nasty lately. I'm worried about him. He may hit a lot when he's playing here."	"Johnny is working on keeping his hands to himself and using words when he's angry. While he's here playing at your house, you can help by reminding him to use words."

AVOID AMBIVALENT WORDS

Ambivalent words like "maybe" and "sometimes" give children the message that you are unsure about what you want them to do. For many children, such phrasing sounds like an invitation to test your limit. Therefore, avoid ambivalent words, and use firm, specific statements which communicate certainty about your expectations.

EXAMPLES:

Ambivalent	*Firm and specific*
"Maybe you should take your bath."	"It's time to take your bath."
"It might be a good idea to wash your face."	"Before we go to the restaurant you'll need to wash your face."
"It's about time to get dressed."	"Before coming downstairs, you will need to get dressed."
"It would be nice if you would put the toys on the shelf."	"When your toys are picked up, you can go outside."

REPLACE AUTHORITARIAN WORDS

Authoritarian words such as "you must," "you should," "you have to," "you ought to," tend to be seen as orders rather than requests. Such words can make children feel they are being forced to do something. When they feel this way, children often rebel, act stubborn, or pretend not to hear. Change statements with authoritarian words into statements that are factual and objective. When expectations are presented in an objective and factual way, children are more likely to cooperate.

EXAMPLES:

Authoritarian	*Firm and Specific*
"You have to put your bike up now!"	"The bike belongs in the garage or it will need to go up for the rest of the day."
"You have to get out of the living room."	"The living room is off limits for the rest of the morning."
"You clean up your room, right now!"	"Before dinner, the toys will need to be in the toy box and the books on the shelf."
"You must go to sleep."	"It's time for bed. We can read two books and I'll kiss you goodnight."

OFFER CHOICES WHEN POSSIBLE.

Offering choices encourages children to make decisions and take responsibility for their own behavior. When given a choice instead of an order, children feel a sense of participation which makes them more likely to cooperate. Choices help children develop their own preferences and in-

dividuality. On many occasions you can allow children to choose between two alternative permissable behaviors. You can also use choices to help children get started in activities they are not motivated to do. When there is no choice about doing a certain activity, you might provide choices about **parts** of the activity, the **sequence** of activity, or **how** the activity is done. Using choices this way can prevent balking or stalling. Before offering a choice, remember: you have to accept whatever choice the child makes, so decide ahead of time what choices are acceptable to you and offer only those alternatives.

EXAMPLES:

Order or Command	*Choice*
"No junk food for breakfast."	"We have Cheerios or granola for breakfast. Which cereal do you want?"
"You have to wear shoes to school."	"Which do you want to wear to school-your tennis shoes or your boots?"
"Get that finger paint off you; you're a mess."	"It's time to clean up. Do you want to get the fingerpaint off your face first, or your arms?"
"Grandma and I are having a private conversation, and you need to get out of here."	"Grandma and I need to have a private conversation. You can play on the porch, in the yard, or your room. Which do you choose?"

AVOID COMPARISONS WITH OTHER CHILDREN

In an effort to change a child's behavior, parents sometimes use comparisons with the child's peers or siblings. Such comparisons can cause resentment, overcompetitiveness, and damage to the child's self-esteem. Change comparisons to specific descriptions of desired behavior, or compare children to themselves rather than others.

EXAMPLES:

Comparing	*Specific Descriptions*
"Why don't you clean up your room the way your sister, Allison, does?"	"You need to put your toys away before you can ride your bike."

"Johnny is 3 and he doesn't hit other children. You're 5 and still can't remember not to hit."	"When you're angry you need to use words."
"See if you can get dressed faster than your brother."	"Yesterday you got dressed and to the table in 10 minutes. Bet you can beat that time today!"
"None of the other children in your class write so sloppily."	"Let's try again. Writing is hard work and takes practice. If you stay with it I know you'll improve."

USE EXTERNAL REFERENCES FOR SETTING LIMITS

Personal statements such as "you have to," "I need to," and "we must" can invite some children to resist cooperating. Using an external reference such as a clock, an activity, or a signal makes the focus less personal and can help children accept a limit without resisting. It is much harder for children to have a power struggle with an object or a concept than with you.

EXAMPLES:

Personally Stated Limit	*Limit with External Reference*
"I said to do your chores."	"When 'Wonder Woman' goes off, it will be time to do your chores."
"You can come out of time-out when I say so."	"When the timer goes off, you may come back to the play room."
"Come inside when I tell you."	"When the street lights come on, it will be time to come inside."
"Nap time is over when I tell you."	"When the big hand is on the four, rest time is over."
"We can go to the store whenever I decide."	"After I finish the dishes, we can go to the store."

THE TIMING OF LIMIT SETTING . . . LET TIME WORK FOR YOU

ESTABLISH ROUTINES

Routines help make a child's world feel safe and orderly. They also help children learn to function independently; that is, to accept structure without

needing parents to repeat rules over and over. Routines need to be carefully thought through and clearly explained to children. As children get older, they can participate in helping to establish and make changes in routines.

EXAMPLE: *Mealtime routine*

Dinner is served between 6:00 and 6:30 if Sally, age 6, and Beth, 5, have set the table. At the dinner table one person at a time talks. The children are expected to sit in their chairs, use their inside voices, and keep their hands and feet to themselves. About a half hour after the meal is served, plates are taken to the kitchen. Evening snacks are allowed for those who finish their meal on time.

EXAMPLE: *Bedtime routine*

Bedtime for 3-year-old Jerry is 7:30. After dinner, Jerry plays with his dad and takes a bath. He then puts on his pajamas and one of his parents reads two books to him. Then Jerry climbs into bed, and his parents give him a hug and a kiss and tell him goodnight. They tell Jerry one of them will check on him in ten minutes.

PREPARE CHILDREN FOR NEW SITUATIONS

Set the stage for new situations by telling children ahead of time what will happen and how you expect them to behave. Knowing what will happen in new situations and having guidelines for appropriate behavior will help a child feel more secure.

EXAMPLES:

"When we go to the fairgrounds, stay with Mom and Dad. If you want to look at something away from us, ask first. We will all ride four rides, and we can get a drink and one thing to eat."

"In the grocery store, you can help Daddy by picking out two kinds of cereal and one kind of cookie. Please stay by my side or you will need to sit in the cart."

"When we go to Aunt Jane's house, you may play quietly in Sharon's room while I talk to Aunt Jane, or you may run and yell all you want in the backyard."

"After breakfast, Stephen is coming over to play and he will eat lunch with us. After lunch, his mommy will come and pick him up. Remember our rule about sharing toys. Are there any toys you don't want to share? We will need to put them away before Stephen comes."

POINT OUT THE SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITIES, EVEN THOSE OCCURRING DAILY

Let children know the order of upcoming events. They will cooperate more readily if they know the sequence of events ahead of time.

EXAMPLES:

"When you wake up from your nap, I'll be back to pick you up. When we get home, we can play with the fingerpaints or do some cutting and pasting."

"When I'm finished dressing the baby, we can take a walk outside."

"We'll go to Uncle Alex's house after we cook breakfast, wash the dishes, and pack."

"When the Legos are picked up, we'll be ready to color."

PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR CHANGES AND ALLOW TIME FOR TRANSITION

Young children often have a hard time changing from one activity to another, and for some children this is particularly difficult. Preparation for change helps children organize themselves. It's important to know your child's own style and allow sufficient time for transition, perhaps by using a song or a game. A timer or a buzzer can also be useful for children who have difficulty with changes.

EXAMPLES:

"You can color one more picture before it will be time to put on your coat and go to the store."

"Soon it will be time to take a bath. Before bath time, we can play the curtain game. You can hide behind the shower curtain and I'll try to find you."

"You can slide three more times and then it will be time to go inside."

"You can hold the baby a few more minutes and then she needs to go to sleep in her crib."

"It's almost time for clean-up. When the buzzer goes off everyone will need to start putting toys on the shelf."

RECOGNIZE THAT IT CAN BE HARD FOR CHILDREN TO STOP

Sometimes children have a hard time stopping an activity in which they are involved. When there is no time left for them to complete, or even to begin an activity they are eager to do, children will show a lot of resistance toward moving on. To prevent or minimize these difficulties, it helps to offer children a time in the future when they can get back to the activity.

EXAMPLES:

"It's starting to rain so we need to stop playing catch. If the rain stops this afternoon, we can play catch again before supper."

"We need to put this book up for now. We can read it after naptime."

"It's clean-up time now. Tomorrow you can play with the blocks again."

"It's time to go to the car. Your Tinkertoys need to stay here until we come back. You can take a book or a truck with you."

CONCLUSION

Remember, there are no magic answers to discipline. We hope the tips provided in this pamphlet help you develop your own style and approach to setting limits. Learning self-control is a slow, gradual process. As children grow and experience limits, they will develop more and more self-control. We hope the guidelines and tips in this booklet help make the process more positive and understandable for you and your children.

This booklet is one of a continuing series of booklets of interest to parents and teachers of young children. Please write Project Enlightenment for a list of topics in this series or for information about other Project publications.

Project Enlightenment
Wake County Public School System
501 S. Boylan Avenue
Raleigh, N.C. 27603